

PROPOSED COUNCIL STUDY ISSUE

For Calendar Year: 2005New Previous Year (below line/defer) X Issue: Visual Streetscape Standards for Murphy AvenueLead Department: Community DevelopmentGeneral Plan Element or Sub-Element: Heritage Preservation Sub-ElementLand Use and Transportation Element

1. What are the key elements of the issue? What precipitated it?

It has been over ten years since the standards for Murphy Avenue have been reviewed. In addition to architectural guidelines, there are standards for the streetscape in the Murphy Avenue Design Guidelines. The streetscape is also addressed in the Outdoor Dining Policy for Murphy Avenue. There are a variety of types of street furniture currently displayed on the street including some businesses that have placed their own planters and decorative elements. The issue of freestanding A-frame signs and banners has also become a topic for Murphy Avenue. This study would complement the existing Murphy Avenue Design Guidelines but would focus primarily on the view of the street (primarily the sidewalk area) between the building faces on opposite sides of the street and would create updated policies and guidelines.

2005 is an optimal time to address the Murphy Avenue streetscape since the Forum's Town Center proposal was approved this past year. As part of this approval, conditions were included which require the Forum Group to incorporate certain design elements of historic Murphy Avenue into the Forum's project. The conditions also require the applicant to work with the Downtown Merchant's Association on streetscape designs and upgrades. The Heritage Preservation Commission would participate in this process by advising the Forum Group through the updated guidelines and working with the Downtown Merchant's Association in relation to the areas of the proposed development visible from the Historic Downtown.

During 2004 Staff worked with the restaurants on historic Murphy Avenue to achieve compliance with the current Outdoor Dining Policy. Through that effort several issues have surfaced that suggest that it may be time to update this policy. Updating the Outdoor Dining Policy could be accomplished as the first step of this study, and could be completed very quickly. Staff recommends that if Council prioritizes this study for streetscape standards, the revision of the Outdoor Dining Policy will be the first phase.

VISUAL STREETSCAPE STANDARDS – CONT.

Staff has received preliminary approval for a \$75,000 Planning grant from the Transportation for Livable Cities (TLC) program. The grant would facilitate the preparation of streetscape design concepts through outreach with the stakeholder community (Murphy Ave Business Association, Forum Group, Heritage Preservation Commission, etc.) and hiring of a design professional. The city's local match of \$15,000 would need to be a cash contribution and would be used for such things as room rentals for meetings, printing, etc. If the city does not receive the grant, staff can complete this Study Issue, however, the scope would not be as broad unless the Council allocates additional funds for consultant assistance.

This project is related to the study "Implementation Plan for Downtown Improvements" (CDD-9). The public improvements on Murphy Avenue associated with the resulting streetscape standards could potentially be funded with the \$1.5 million capital project.

This item was ranked 8 of 17 by the City Council for the 2004 Study Issue Calendar, but fell below the line.

2. How does this relate to the General Plan or existing City Policy?

Land Use and Transportation Element:

Goal C1 – Preserve and enhance an attractive community, with a positive image and a sense of place that consists of distinctive neighborhoods, pockets of interest, and human-scaled development.

Downtown Specific Plan Goals and Policies :

The Goals and Policies of the Specific plan create the basic priorities for implementing the downtown vision. Goals are intended as "high level outcomes" desired for the community and policies are definite courses of actions to guide present and future decisions. The primary goals for the Downtown Specific Plan are:

- Protect and enhance existing neighborhoods.
- Improve the street character.

3. Origin of issue:

Council Member(s): _____

General Plan: _____

City Staff: _____

Planning

Board or Commission (identify name of the advisory body from the list below):

Heritage Preservation
Commission

Heritage Preservation Commission ranked this study issue 1 of 3

VISUAL STREETSCAPE STANDARDS – CONT.

Board or Commission ranking comments:

4. Multiple Year Project? Yes ___ No X Expected Year Completed 2005
5. Estimated work hours for completion of the study issue (use 5 or 8-hour increments):

(a) Estimated work hours from the lead department 240
(b) Estimated work hours from consultant(s) if applicable: _____
(c) Estimated work hours from the City Attorney's Office: 10
(d) Estimated work hours from Finance: _____
(e) Estimated work hours from other department(s):
Department: DPW 40
Department: _____
Department: _____

Total Estimated Hours: 290

6. Expected participation involved in the study issue process?
(a) Does Council need to approve a work plan? Yes ___ No X
(b) Does this issue require review by a Board/Commission? If so, please list below: Yes X No ___
Heritage Preservation Commission
(c) Is a Council Study Session anticipated? Yes ___ No X
(d) What is the public participation process?

Outreach meetings will be conducted with property owners and business owners/operators on Murphy Avenue, the Forum Group, the Chamber of Commerce, and any other interested parties.

7. Cost of Study: Please mark appropriate item below.

X Costs covered in operating budget – 242 – Community Planning

___ Costs covered by project -

X Budget modification needed for study – to accept a \$75,000 grant, if awarded and to provide the \$15,000 match

Explain below what the additional funding will be used for: The grant would enable a broader public outreach and the hiring of a design professional to assist in the preparation of preliminary design concepts for Murphy Avenue. The grant would not be needed for the first phase to update the Outdoor Dining Policy.

VISUAL STREETSCAPE STANDARDS – CONT.

8. Potential fiscal impact to implement recommendations in the Study approved by Council, if any:

Mark a range for the items below:	\$500 or none	\$50K or less	\$51K - \$100K	\$101K - \$500K	\$501K or more
Capital expenditure range				X	
Operating expenditure range		X			
New revenues/savings range	X				

Explain impact briefly: Upon completion of the study, Murphy Avenue Streetscape Guidelines would be reformatted and printed, resulting in costs to the operation budget of approximately \$1000 for 100 copies. In order to implement the design standards for public street improvements up to \$300,000-400,000 may be needed. Private features such as tables, chairs, and signs would not have a cost to the City.

9. Staff Recommendation for this calendar year:


“For” Study X Explain:

The Outdoor Dining Policy is fresh in the minds of the Murphy Avenue restaurateurs. Staff has already gained an understanding of the concerns and possible solutions and can quickly return to the Council with this as the first phase of the study. It would be helpful to the restaurants to have this issue clarified before the spring when outdoor dining increases in popularity.

Due to the impending redevelopment of the Sunnyvale Mall, it is timely to consider any changes in the potential use of Murphy Avenue sidewalks and/or any upgrading of the public streetscape features.

“Against” Study Explain. If staff suggests that this study should not be considered again in the future or deferred at this time, please include this in your explanation:

No Recommendation

Reviewed by 
Department Director

11/17/04
Date

Approved by 
City Manager

11/23/04
Date